

# THE BRAILLE MONITOR

INK PRINT EDITION

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization speaking for the blind--it is the blind speaking for themselves

N. F. B. Headquarters  
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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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BRAILLE MONITOR  
(February 1959)

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## ON THE WASHINGTON FRONT

As we go to press in mid-January the Eighty-Sixth Congress is just beginning its first session. The Kennedy-Baring Bill and the King Bill are being reintroduced and prospects for both seem considerably brighter than a year ago.

It is expected that there will be at least as many, and perhaps more co-sponsors of the first measure than in 1957-58. Our Washington team, the two Johns -- Taylor and Nagle -- are rushing about these days interviewing just as many Congressmen as they can.

But again there must be help from the home districts. Congressmen who have heard from their own constituents are going to be much more ready to listen to our representatives than if they had to be approached cold. It is to be hoped that Federationists everywhere have been energetically on the job. If you have not done so, however, get in your letters and telegrams immediately and get your family, friends and acquaintances to do likewise. One of the most effective things you can do is to draw up petitions asking the Congressmen for co-sponsorship and active support, and get these signed by as many prominent citizens as you possibly can -- especially those in the political party of your Congressman. He can not afford to ignore the wishes of those who have supported him in the past and whose support he will again need in 1960.

As most readers will recall, the members of the West Virginia Federation had reason to be extremely proud of the fact that last year 100 per cent of their representatives in the lower House of Congress introduced "Right to Organize" bills identical with the one sponsored by Congressman Baring. The indefatigable Victor Gonzalez spearheaded the drive which brought about this result. This year he and his colleagues have two brand-new Senators to work on and our West Virginia people are again very much on the job. Mr. Gonzalez has been kind enough to send me carbons of letters he is sending to Washington at the present time and he is certainly doing a terrific piece of work, as are undoubtedly others from his state.

In Alabama, the home state of Congressman Elliott, (Chairman of the Sub-Committee before which the hearings are scheduled to be conducted), the resolute and resourceful Eulasee Hardenbergh is leaving no stone unturned. She has been bombarding, not only Mr. Elliott, but every Representative from her state, and she feels that this time she may get all of them -- or, at least, all but one.

As indicated in the article in the January issue, entitled "Common Ground", and confirmed in a memorandum dated December 29, written by Mr. George Keane and addressed to John Taylor, William Thompson, Hulen C. Walker, Irvin P. Schloss and M. Robert Barnett, there will be unanimous support for the King Bill during this session of Congress. John Taylor evidently did a real selling job here. With the American Foundation for the Blind, The American Association of Workers for the Blind, the Blinded Veterans Association and the National Federation of the Blind all actively supporting this measure, at least some of its provisions should become law before the end of this session -- if only the House Ways and Means Committee carries out its present intention to consider social security legislation.

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#### TEXT OF THE KENNEDY-BARING BILL

(It is important that we keep clearly in mind the exact contents of the measure, into the enactment of which we are putting so much time and energy. The Bill is very brief and right to the point. Please reread it carefully).

"BE IT ENACTED, ... That in the formulation, administration and execution of programs for the aid and rehabilitation of the blind, the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare shall to the fullest extent practicable consult and advise with authorized representatives of organizations of the blind; and shall in developing and recommending policies and procedures to State agencies take such steps as may be appropriate to encourage such agencies to consult with authorized representatives of organizations of the blind in the formulation, administration, and execution of any State program for the aid and rehabilitation of the blind to which Federal funds are contributed.

"Section 2. No officer or employee of any Federal, State, or other agency concerned with the administration of any program for the aid or rehabilitation of the blind to which Federal funds have been contributed shall exert the influence of his office or position against the right of the blind to join organizations of the blind. The Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare shall adopt such regulations and shall condition Federal grants to State or other programs for the blind on such terms as will prevent the exertion of any such influence against self-expression of the blind through organizations of the blind."

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## BARING CO-SPONSORS

A last minute report from Washington gives us the names of the first few Congressmen who have already introduced bills which are, in all important respects, parallel to that of Walter Baring of Nevada, the number of which, this year, is H.R. 14: H.R. 52, Edward P. Boland, Massachusetts; H.R. 124, Mrs. Elizabeth Kee, West Virginia; H.R. 187, Thomas J. Lane, Massachusetts; H.R. 348, Merwin Coad, Iowa; H.R. 403, Leo W. O'Brien, New York; H.R. 436, Armistead I. Selden, Jr., Alabama; H.R. 763, Carl Elliott, Alabama; H.R. 787, H. R. Gross, Iowa; H.R. 1097, Cleveland M. Bailey, West Virginia; H.R. 1175, Harley O. Staggers, West Virginia; H.R. 1788, Frank T. Bow, Ohio; H.R. 1878, Adam C. Powell, Jr., New York; H.R. 1931, Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr., Massachusetts; H.R. 1964, John M. Slack, Jr., West Virginia; H.R. 2168, Frank Ikard, Texas; H.R. 2338, Kenneth Hechler, West Virginia; H.R. 2419, Philip J. Philbin, Massachusetts; H.R. 2452, Thomas L. Ashley, Ohio; H.R. 2472, Harold D. Donohue, Massachusetts, and H.R. 2559, Albert Rains, Alabama. Total -- 21.

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## STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER

The following statement has been introduced into the Congressional Record by Congressman Thomas J. Lane of Massachusetts:

"It is a well known characteristic of American society that persons sharing a common interest or concern form organizations to give greater force to their opinions.

"To freely meet and discuss, to arrive at conclusions and to make these conclusions known is an unquestioned right, sanctioned both by our constitutional determinations and the customs of our people established through our history.

"In forty-five states of the nation, blind men and women have exercised this right to assemble, to organize, and to make known their views on matters which are of particular concern to the blind. These organizations are joined together in the National Federation of the Blind, the only country-wide organization which any blind person may join.

"But in some parts of the United States, the right of the blind to join this organization has been questioned. Officials of agencies created for the sole purpose of serving the blind, and financed in part by Federal funds have used their position to intimidate, coerce and threaten blind persons who have joined the local affiliates of the National Federation of the Blind.

"The blind of the nation have long been of vital concern to the Congress of the United States. Programs of aid and rehabilitation have been adopted so that these blind persons might better contend with the problems incidental to living in a sighted community.

"On January 7, 1959, I introduced H.R. 187, 'A Bill to Protect the Right of the Blind to Self-Expression Through Organizations of the Blind'....

"On the fifth of last July, it was my happy privilege to attend the convention banquet of the National Federation of the Blind, held in Boston, Massachusetts. I was invited to it by the members of the Greater Lawrence Association of the Blind whom I know, and with whom I have worked on occasions to assist them in their projects.

"Massachusetts is not one of the states where the organized blind -- The Associated Blind of Massachusetts -- are struggling for the rights of blind people against the state agency for the blind. John F. Mungovan, Director of the Massachusetts Division of the Blind, was also a guest at this same banquet. He was a speaker during the course of the convention.

"In 1957, at the New Orleans convention of the National Federation of the Blind, Mr. Mungovan had received the highest award of this organization for distinguished service to the blind.

"On the 14th of August, 1958, Mr. Mungovan was re-appointed by the Governor of Massachusetts for a new term as Director of the state agency for the blind. The Associated Blind of Massachusetts had worked long and hard for this re-appointment and were responsible, in great measure, for the ultimate action of re-appointment.

"Blind men and women in all the states should have the same opportunity to organize and cooperate with the professional workers for the blind as they have in my own state of Massachusetts."

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#### CREDO

by Claude Ray

(Editor's Note: Mr. Ray, who is blind, is the worm farmer, of Lakeland, Florida, who has had previous mention in these pages. Following is a portion of the essay which he submitted in the annual prize contest sponsored by the Florida Public Relations Association. I have taken a few slight editorial liberties with the text.)

The story of blindness, in its public relations aspect, is an epic. For a long time it had all the earmarks of a tragic epic. The dominant theme appeared to be man's inhumanity to man. In many primitive cultures, where the economy was almost always one of extreme scarcity, and where the blind were considered useless as either hunters or fighters, they were ruthlessly put to death, thus eliminating the problem in a most effective manner. Later, when things became a little easier, and the first stirrings of human pity began to influence the conduct of man toward man, the blind were allowed to survive, (if they could), through public begging. During long ages and in many lands, the blind of the world beat the mendicant drums and held forth the begging bowls. If the starving and miserable blind beggar had any concept of public relations during these dreary centuries, it was to convince those about him that he was the most wretched of all mortals. The more helpless and wretched he could make himself appear, the more he could wring the hearts of passers-by. Thus developed the stereotype of the helpless blind. There have undoubtedly always been a few exceptions -- strong, rugged, determined blind individuals, who fought the battle through in obscurity and who achieved partial or complete independence. But almost no one knew of these exceptions. The only blind people the general public ever saw were the roadside beggars.

In the past century and a half the whining violin has been giving way to the clarion trumpet. The dominant theme of the epic has been undergoing a radical change. The doleful, minor strain is becoming a spirited marching song, in a stirring major key. The evolution of social consciousness in modern society, the invention and development of Braille and, above all, self-organization of the blind, have been the decisive factors in this great metamorphosis.

Self-appointed sighted spokesmen for the blind -- usually well-intentioned but often blundering -- are being replaced by capable, well-informed leaders who are themselves blind -- the Kellers, the MacKenzies, the tenBroeks. What they have to say bears the unmistakable hallmark of authenticity because they have themselves experienced blindness.

The organized blind movement of today seeks help and understanding from the sighted world but it neither seeks nor desires charity. It seeks only opportunity for those who are potentially capable of self-support. It seeks security, as a matter of right, for those blind people who, by reason of age or additional handicaps, cannot compete in the labor market. It demands an end to social and economic discrimination against the blind. Its members are made up, for the most part, of active, competent and self-reliant blind people, who have not become a part of the movement because they expected or desired

personal benefits. What they do desire, passionately, through self-organization, is to be able to extend effective help to those of their fellow-blind who have been less fortunate. The organized blind, unlike some segments of organized labor, fight the battles of all their fellow-blind.

Blindness is a problem which, to a large extent, must be solved by the blind themselves. That problem, stated in its simplest terms, is successful adjustment to the sighted world. Essentially we are normal people who, from accident or misfortune, happen to be blind -- nothing more. We must continue to perform daily functions such as feeding and dressing ourselves, reading, writing and traveling by ourselves. We want to marry, rear families and certainly -- most certainly -- we want productive employment. We must be given a chance to earn a wage sufficient to support ourselves and our loved ones.

To accomplish this we must wear down, batter down and completely destroy the wall of prejudice, superstition and misconception which has stood in the way of our progress so long. We must prove ourselves; and thereby alter the attitude of the concerned father, the tender mother, the worried wife, the stranger on the street, the cop on the beat, the skeptical employer. We must convince the world that life as a blind person need not be a drab existence in loneliness, helplessness and despair. We have a tremendous amount of public relations work to do and, through our own organized efforts, we can do it.

Many of the schools and agencies for the blind have begun to learn how to work with the blind. Others have not. Some of these latter are like parents who become worried and apprehensive when their offspring show the first signs of independence. Others have become so fond of the power to control the lives of their clients that they stubbornly resist any and all changes which seem to them to threaten that control. Still others sincerely believe that their status as "professionals" gives them an unquestionable and unchallengeable right to decide what is best for blind people.

The founding fathers of our great country wrote into some of our basic documents such language as for, of and by the people. So far as I am concerned, only one organization qualifies as for, of and by the blind. This organization, expressing the viewpoints and protecting the rights of forty-thousand blind men and women in the United States, is the National Federation of the Blind.

When we in Florida joined the NFB, we were asked, "What are you fellows doing here to improve the lot of our Florida blind people?" The question is still being asked. And also -- "What will the Federation

do for me?" Often the person asking such questions is a welfare case or has a desperate problem, for which the agencies have no solution. How does it make me feel when I tell this person that we are not a welfare organization? It is only at such times that I actually feel like one of the helpless blind. I must try to make the questioner understand that we cannot dissipate our limited strength and resources in direct welfare work. Our function, our effective role in this area, is to make sure that the state and private agencies actually do the things they claim to do. We should and we must see to it that the money raised through taxation, or contributed by the public, is used to bring needed welfare and rehabilitation services to those who need them and are entitled to them. Whenever humanly possible, we must do these things through friendly and helpful cooperation with the state and private agencies. There may be times, however, when informed advice and friendly persuasion meet with indifference, hostility or outright, arbitrary rejection. It is then, and only then, that we are justified in bringing various types of pressure to bear on the situation. Such pressure may have to come through an aroused public opinion, through court action, or through corrective and remedial legislation. As an isolated individual, I am a voice crying in the wilderness. As a part of a strong and, if necessary, militant organization of the blind, my voice will be heard and what I have to say understood.

A few blind individuals are employed by agencies and organizations for the blind. They may or may not be sympathetic to the aspirations of the organized blind. It is almost inevitable that some of these blind agency employees will be strongly influenced, in their opinions and in their actions, by job consciousness. They come to identify themselves with their employers rather than with those they are employed to serve. Unfortunately the views expressed by these latter have been given far too much weight by the sighted public because of the great prestige which some of the big agencies enjoy. At times it becomes necessary for our organization to point out to the public that these particular blind individuals really represent nobody and speak only for themselves. Even if they desired to do so, they are seldom in a position to express views which are completely objective, or in any way critical, when it comes to the agencies which employ them. The role of critic belongs properly to those who are affected by what the agency does or does not do.

To me the Federation is a Union, expressing my views and protecting my rights and interests as a blind man. To me the Federation is the voice of the blind speaking to state legislatures and to Congress. To me my local chapter of the Federation is a club, where the members meet to discuss matters of common interest and to plan social and recreational projects at the local level. To me the Federation is a lodge,

a brotherhood of kindred spirits, a sanctum which will not be violated by those with alien sympathies. To me the Federation is a missionary society, to which I give all of my spare time and more money than I can afford, in the firm belief that I am helping other blind people to a better way of life.

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#### "THE NUMBERS RACKET"

Despite thousands of arrests and some convictions, big city mobsters continue to reap a bountiful harvest of dimes, quarters and dollars by means of a device which resembles a lottery but with the odds so heavily stacked against the purchaser of the tickets that it really boils down to wholesale larceny. There are variations but the most common practice is for the ticket to bear a number of five digits. When the New York Stock Exchange closes each day, the number of stocks traded is announced. If the last two numbers on the ticket are the same as those of the stock sales report, the holder may get a dollar. If the last three are the same he may get five dollars. The last four are worth perhaps twenty-five dollars and the ticket corresponding to the last five numbers may win a thousand dollars or more. High pressure "pushers" circulate in the poorer sections of the cities, literally picking the pockets of their unwary victims. Usually only about ten percent of the day's take is returned in the form of prizes and the ninety percent goes to the "syndicate". This is the notorious numbers racket.

In vocational rehabilitation, the Administration demands that each state agency come through with a certain number of "closures" each year. This requirement would be all to the good -- except for the ease with which it is circumvented. It is an open secret that many of the alleged closures would not stand up under searching scrutiny. In most states (but not all), a placement in a sheltered workshop -- no matter how pitifully meager the wage -- is counted as a closure. If a blind girl marries, the agency claims credit -- and gets it. If a blind person gets his own job, many state rehabilitation agencies will grab him as a closure as soon as they find out about it. In Little Rock, Arkansas, the NFB Survey Team came across one case where a blind man had been at work, (self obtained), for three years before the state placement counselor found out about it, but the usual practice was followed. In Memphis, Tennessee, a public spirited citizen personally secured a number of vending stand locations and installed blind operators. The rehabilitation counselor in that area -- who had tried to block his efforts -- nevertheless claimed all these placements as her own. Not so many years ago, the Colorado agency obtained needed closures by juggling the vending stand program -- shifting the operators about and claiming a closure for each

transfer. And so it goes.

Naturally enough, very few rehab people admit this publicly. In their speeches and writings they dearly love to refer to their occupation as a "discipline" -- a term which carries with it a connotation of almost monastic dedication to a chosen line of work. There are times when the somewhat pompous repetition of this overworked word, in articles in the New Outlook and in other journals, becomes most wearisome.

In their own gatherings, however, high echelon vocational rehabilitation officials often let down their hair and talk freely about how they get the number of closures to fill their quotas. So great, in fact, is the preoccupation with this subject that, in their cozy little conclaves, some of them cynically, (but perhaps accurately), refer to their "discipline" as the numbers racket!

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#### SPECIAL NOTICE

From now on, please send the names of persons wishing to receive the Braille Monitor to 605 South Few Street, Madison 3, Wisconsin. The National Federation of the Blind is taking over the publication and the old Chicago and Los Angeles addresses will no longer be active. The Braille edition is free and the subscription price of the ink-print edition is \$3 per year.

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#### LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

"Dear George: With each issue of the Monitor there is more and varied information for us who are so very interested in the activities of the organized blind all over the nation -- and in other countries too. I especially enjoyed reading your report of the World Conference in Ceylon last summer, and feel that better communication is so necessary among the member nations.

"The Alameda County Club in Oakland, California, is interested in the financial future of the NFB and is making a regular effort to help. At each club meeting tickets are sold on two prizes. The smaller one, twenty-five cents a ticket, is always a two pound box of fine candy. The other prize varies from time to time and the tickets are fifty cents. Some of the many items which we have given over the past two or three years have been: an electric percolator, overnight case, large canned ham, coffee warmer, TV trays, blanket, set of dishes, electric iron,

deep fat fryer, toaster, vibrating pillow, electric skillet, and a box of assorted groceries in a dish drainer rack. Some of these items were more expensive than others but sale prices have always been watched and some of them were really good bargains. The members are enthusiastic about the drawing, which is done after the business meeting. One half of the net returns is sent to the NFB Endowment Fund; the other half is kept in our own treasury. The amounts have been quite varied because the size of our crowds fluctuates. Our highest contribution for one month was \$30.83 while the lowest was \$4.60. We do not feel, however, that the size of the contribution is the significant part of it. The important thing is the club's regular participation in the affairs of our national organization. I just hope more clubs will inaugurate some regular method by which they can do their part in building the NFB Endowment Fund, which we all hope will some day grow large enough so that the revenues from it will become an important factor in financing the vital program of the organized blind.

"Best regards to you and your staff!" Onvia Ticer, (President), Oakland, California.

(Editor's Note: Some time ago the Monitor published an account of the lottery conducted as a part of the monthly meetings of the Alameda County Club of Adult Blind, written by the then President, Kenneth Jernigan, but so many new chapters have come into existence since then that it is felt the publication of Miss Ticer's present letter may be of considerable value.)

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"Dear Editor: I have just read the December issue and note that you find it impossible to condense the account of your world trip last summer sufficiently so as to make a Monitor article of reasonable length. I think many Monitor readers will be deeply disappointed at this announcement and I have a solution for those of them who have access to a tape recorder. You and Mrs. Card were on the radio station four days in succession after your return and I have a very good tape recording of that series of interviews. I will make a copy for anyone who cares to send me a 1,200 foot tape. A tape of that length will also permit me to dub in my recording of your departure from the airport last July, including all the noise and confusion that were a part of that occasion." James Sletten, 2709 Myrtle Street, Madison 3, Wisconsin.

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"Dear Mr. Card: We are pleased to give you the results of our October, 1958 election of officers, feeling that you might like to include this information in a future issue of the Monitor. President, Mrs. Everett

Foulkrod, re-elected; First Vice President, Mr. William Wirtz; Second Vice President, Miss Lydia Stuples; Secretary, Mr. James F. Nelson, Jr., re-elected, and Treasurer, Mr. Herbert Mendel.

"As we launch forth upon a new year, we do so with the belief that substantial progress is being made here by the Richmond Area Federation of the Blind. Our membership is growing, and various fund-raising projects have been pursued, with gratifying success. Several newspaper articles relative to the Richmond Area Federation of the Blind have appeared locally in the past few weeks, and announcements concerning our organization have been carried over WRVA-AM, a 50,000-watt station here in this city.

"We are fortunate to have such a fine magazine as the Monitor and such a capable and dynamic editor as yourself. Much success and joy to you in the New Year." James F. Nelson, Jr., Richmond 34, Virginia.

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"Dear George: . . . When I arrived home from Boston, I found that my house had been broken into and my radio, typewriter, Talking Book machine and everything else of use or value had been taken. . . . I enjoyed reading the part of Les Webb's letter in the Monitor. Les is one of my best friends and a wonderful worker. He did a splendid job in the program arrangements for our past convention. I enjoyed that convention tremendously but I got only eight hours' sleep during the five days that I was away from home. Here in Douglas we have lost one of our best workers. Violet Codding died on November 3rd. I am trying to do what I can in her place. . . . I am trying to handle the Entertainment, Membership and Publicity Committees and have been appointed White Cane Week Chairman. . . . Did you know that Maria Baumann is now the Editor of the White Cane Journal? Or that Richard Stotera is no longer working for the Welfare Department? Edna Mullikin is now Director of the Phoenix Center for the Blind. She will be excellent in that capacity. . . . I hope that several of us will be able to travel to Santa Fe to the coming convention. I will probably know more about that after our next Board meeting. I believe that we have a very good Board now. . . ." Mrs. Faye Langdon, Douglas, Arizona.

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"Dear Mr. Card: Ever since I read the article, "And Some of Us Also Have Dandruff", in this issue of the Braille Monitor I have been concerned about its effect on the average sighted reader who is not yet educated to blindness. I was a little surprised when you did not make it clear to the reader that the Federation does not agree with Mr. Alpaiwala's point of view.

"My three years of active association with the Federation has done much to broaden my own point of view about blindness. Before this time I often found myself underestimating my ability and also that of other blind people. It is wonderful to be able to profit by the knowledge of others.

"May I take this opportunity to thank you for what you have done and I am sure will continue to do for the Federation even though you will not be holding office...." Lois Boltin, Columbia, South Carolina.

(Editor's Reply: "Dear Miss Boltin: I was quite intrigued by your comment on the article, 'And Some of Us Also Have Dandruff'. As a matter of fact, when I first prepared this item I did include an editorial comment to the effect that the views expressed by this oriental 'expert' were certainly not shared by the Federation. Then I deleted this observation because I felt that it was really unnecessary and would be almost an insult to the intelligence of the Monitor's readers. Nevertheless, you may be quite right and very possibly I should have spelled it out....")

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"Dear George:... Much time has been wasted and our hopeful boasts and expectations back in October seem doomed for the present. I shall try to do what I can, however, to pick up the loose ends and try to make some progress with my Legislative Committee.... I can't tell you how much I enjoy my Monitor and how I look for it eagerly each month. Thank God for the other active and vital affiliates who provide such interesting material." Elena Landi, Providence, Rhode Island.

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"Dear Mr. Card: I wish to express my appreciation for the Braille Monitor -- the way it is compiled and the selection of articles in it. The Monitor is a library of important and practical information to all of us.... The fact that the Monitor, from the first page to the last, deals strictly with matters which directly concern the blind and their problems, is very much to my liking.... The Editor merits unreserved credit for his judicious handling of the great volume of material which comes to his office....

"Not so many years ago there was a very noticeable lack of interest on the part of the public in any kind of practical program for the blind to aid them in their efforts towards independence and self-support. Now, with the National Federation of the Blind as trail blazer, and the Braille Monitor as spokesman, we have no longer any reason for dis-

couragement or misgivings....

"Profound thanks are also due to our very capable Dr. tenBroek. The energy back of his relentless 'go, go, go!' is almost beyond comprehension. Such an indomitable spirit fires with enthusiasm any audience he confronts....

"I'm enclosing a postal money order to pay for the ink-print edition of the Braille Monitor for the purpose of getting sighted friends interested in the general welfare of the blind. I have also added 50 cents to the enclosed order to pay for the series called 'Misconceptions'.... I understand that permission is granted to have these articles printed in our local papers." William Baller, Escondido, California.

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"Dear Sir:... The Braille Monitor continues to reach me regularly and I read its contents with interest and pride. Honestly, it's the blind reader's digest; the articles are so varied, numerous, timely. Greetings and best wishes for continued success in the grand job you are doing in editing our own Braille Monitor." Edward J. Mayrand, St. Paul 8, Minnesota.

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#### THAT ILLUSIVE SOVIET "ORGANIZATION"

From time to time we hear vague rumors concerning a huge organization of the blind, (or "for the blind") in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Last spring Colonel E. A. Baker, President of the World Council, challenged my statement that the NFB is the largest organization of the blind in the world today, on the grounds that this mysterious Russian group probably has a membership even greater than that of the National Federation. In replying to his letter, I wrote in part:

"I am mildly astonished, Colonel Baker, that you advance as fact the existence of a bona fide Russian organization of the blind. I doubt very much whether you can produce any verifiable evidence that there is such an organization. I have a recent communication from Mr. Michael J. Lloyd, 8 Rock Hill, Broomsgrove, Worcestershire, England, who is a blind resource teacher in a sighted English school. Mr. Lloyd spent most of last summer [1957] in Moscow. He visited the residential school there, a number of plants where blind people are employed, and a considerable number of blind people in other occupations, including the professions. Mr. Lloyd stated that he had heard vague rumors about

the existence of an organization of the blind but that he had found no evidence of such an organization. He felt positive that there could be no chapter in Moscow because he had made systematic inquiries and no one with whom he talked had any firsthand knowledge about any national organization of the blind. Even if such an organization did exist, it would necessarily be in the nature of a company union, subject to strict governmental supervision and control, and could be in no way comparable to a free organization such as the National Federation of the Blind."

In the excellent paper which he read at our Boston Convention last July, John Jarvis appeared rather confident that an all-Russian organization of the blind really did exist. He relied, however, on a communication from an official of the organization and, like so many other communications from Russian sources, this one may very well contain a good deal of self-serving propaganda. The writer of the communication, a Mr. Ivanov, states that every blind citizen in all of the fifteen Soviet Republics is a member, but such a claim is certainly not borne out by the testimony of other Western travelers who have visited Russia, and anyone who has ever attempted to form a genuinely "voluntary" organization of the blind knows that the inclusion of 100 percent of all blind persons is utterly impossible. Only compulsory membership registration, governmentally enforced by a police state, could achieve such a result.

The most recent testimony I have come across is contained in an article appearing in the December New Outlook for the Blind, written by Emily J. Klinkhart, of the American Foundation staff, who was a member of a cultural exchange group which visited Russia last summer. She writes, in part: "The Principal [of the Leningrad School for the Blind] said that the All-Union Society for the Blind [note the preposition] an organization that seems to cover the entire U.S.S.R., with branches everywhere, is most helpful to the school. I had heard earlier that the All-Union Society was active in employment. Although I kept asking to be taken to a branch of the Society, none of the interpreters or educational personnel that surrounded our group ever knew where I could find an office. I tried asking a blind person on the street but he didn't know English, so my efforts came to a dead halt. Anyway, I was told that getting a blind person a job in the U.S.S.R. is no problem. The Principal of the School talks the situation over with some plant manager, and they put the blind person to work."

The evidence available at this time certainly does not document the existence of a Russian organization of the blind which is in any way comparable to ours, or to those in other parts of the free world.

The author of the New Outlook article quoted above made some

other interesting observations during her brief visit to Moscow, Kiev and Leningrad. She noted that the first half of the first car in all subway trains in Moscow was reserved for pregnant women and for the physically handicapped. She saw many blind persons in these reserved sections, but no canes, artificial eyes or guide dogs. She saw very few dogs of any kind, in fact, and she was told that, during World War II, the canine population almost completely disappeared because it was used to augment the meager diet of the Russian people during that period.

The equivalent of our first twelve grades of schooling is completed in a ten year period in schools for the sighted, and in eleven years in schools for the blind. All graduates, blind or sighted, are entitled to go on to University training if their school records are acceptable, but the maintenance subsidy given all college students by the government is doubled in the case of the blind. There is also generous provision for reader service for blind college students.

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#### CHAPTER ENTERPRISE

The following is an excerpt from a letter written by Sally Jones, Oakland, California, to John Taylor:

"As you probably know, Onvia Ticer replaced Ken Jernigan as President of the Alameda County Club and has not only been continuing the projects started under his administration but has been developing some new ideas of her own. One has been the appointment of a Job Opportunity Committee which is gathering information on the wide variety of jobs that are being filled by blind people across the nation. In addition we are compiling information on other jobs that could be filled by blind workers if some modification is made on equipment being used in the discharge of that job. At the moment, the club has purchased a portion of the TD Teletype unit through which teletype tape is fed when sending messages on to another station. Adjusting the pins to protrude above the gate that holds the tape in place makes it possible for a blind person to read the message being sent. The messages are in code, five dots in a vertical row and not too difficult to read when one becomes proficient in the code. We hope that the modified unit can be used in learning the code and will assist blind people to obtain jobs as Radio Dispatchers. These dispatchers send out messages that are received via telephone, radio and teletypewriter. One applicant for the job felt that he was able to do all the tasks except read the teletype messages that came into the station. Now we have obtained a modified unit that will solve that problem...."

THE ORGANIZED BLIND -- IN THE FREE WORLD, BEHIND  
THE IRON CURTAIN AND UNDER FASCISM

Part II

by John Jarvis

(Editor's Note: This is the final portion of a paper delivered at the Boston Convention. Mr. Jarvis, of the Royal National Institute for the Blind, came from London to read this paper. It aroused great interest.)

Sometimes this cooperation between organizations of the blind and agencies for the blind is of fairly recent date, as for instance in France, where antagonism between the organizations of the blind and the agencies had been so deeply rooted and so bitter that even in international gatherings it has often proved impossible to paper it over. George Card will recall the sorry spectacle presented in Paris four years ago at the General Assembly of the World Council, where a French delegation was sharply divided against itself. But there is in existence a French National Committee for the Welfare of the Blind. The American Foundation for Overseas Blind allows it to occupy office space in its European headquarters in Paris. The aim of the committee is to coordinate the activities of its member associations, to promote measures which can provide them with the necessary resources for joint action, and to do everything which is conducive to the development of work for the blind in France. The committee draws its membership from all the leading organizations which have a national, as opposed to a purely local character. After having been dormant for a number of years, it has quite suddenly come to life again, and now seems determined to get down to some useful work. The president is M. de Saint Quentin, a former French Ambassador to Washington, who is also President of the Association Valentin Haüy, France's principal private agency; but the Secretary-General is M. Guinot, President of the National Federation of Civilian Blind. I think the mere mention of these two names and of the respective groups which they represent will give you a better idea than anything I could say about the pattern which is emerging in France at the present time. From 18th to 21st September of this year, the Committee is to sponsor a four-day convention, to be called the Congress of French Blind Welfare, and this will surely be an important landmark in the history of work for the blind in France. Its importance springs from the fact that, for the first time, leading organizations of the blind and the agencies have agreed to cooperate in the formulation and support of a common program. The cornerstone of this is the idea of compensatory allowances to the blind for the services which they have to buy on

account of their blindness. Other matters to be studied at the convention will include free education and rehabilitation, employment, the legal protection of blind labor, improvements in the social condition of the blind, in their family circumstances, and in financial provision for them. Preliminary documents are being prepared by committee members, regardless of whether they represent an agency or an organization of the blind.

This is a convenient point at which to turn our attention to the final portion of this paper, which will deal with the situation in Great Britain. Over there we warmly welcome this initiative of our French colleagues, and we feel sure that such cooperation offers much better prospects for all the blind of France than the bitter conflicts of the past. Indeed we can see our own past experience now being repeated, not only in France, but also in a number of other countries. With all our shortcomings, we feel that we have travelled farther along the road of partnership than any other country has so far, and we are convinced that this is the right road on which to travel. We started with a century or so of agency monopoly, but about sixty years ago there was an increasingly strong feeling among the blind themselves that this was not enough, and soon the National League of the Blind came into existence. Its objects are "to promote brotherly love and unity among the blind of the United Kingdom; to procure state aid; to secure the application of the factory acts in all public institutions for the blind; to remove all obstacles to the employment of the blind; and in all possible ways to improve the social, economic and political condition of the blind throughout the country." The League had a great deal to do with the shaping of that complex of national legislation which would make work for the blind in Britain today quite unrecognizable to our grandfathers and very strange even to our fathers. When it began its agitation at the turn of the century, however, the idea of comprehensive state provision had hardly been thought of; today it is at the heart of Britain's welfare policy. The League has consistently devoted the major part of its energy towards raising the standard of living of blind workers in the sheltered shops. It is in fact their registered labor union. Within two years of its establishment, the League was affiliated with the Trades Union Congress, our equivalent of your A.F.L.-C.I.O., and still devotes a great deal of its resources to this aspect of its work. This year, for instance, its monthly Braille magazine, Horizon, and its ink-print counterpart, The Blind Advocate, have reported the successful enlistment of support from Scottish labor unions against the danger of competition from goods produced with cheap labor in Scottish prisons. Wages in sheltered shops, adequate technical supervision to ensure maximum output, the best means of grappling with the present business recession, these are the problems with which the League wrestles constantly and to good effect. Here is a concrete example. The League discovers that one of the smaller sheltered

shops is not paying the municipal minimum wage to its blind workers. It immediately takes the matter up with the city government, and with a number of neighboring counties which have workers employed in the shop. As a result, the city council agrees to the payment of the minimum wage from 1st April this year. The League discovers that the shop is also failing to pay nationally recognized piece rates for the goods produced. It makes representations to the managements of the shop and to the city government, and the prices agreed between the League and the National Association of Workshops for the Blind become operative forthwith. In this case the introduction of the minimum wage has meant an increase of twenty-five percent in the weekly income of these blind workers. Incidentally, there are also good prospects that this intervention will lead to the early formation of a branch of the League in this particular town, where they have not had one for some years.

The League holds its national conventions only every three years, and not annually as you do here in the United States. This has been a convention year, and in its report to the delegates, the National Executive Council of the League pointed out that, in common with other labor unions, the League had been obliged in recent times to face the difficulties created by the government's measures to limit public expenditure; but it has been able, not only to preserve what had been won in past years in the wages field, but also to secure some increases. In the public assistance field, however, success was not so great during the last three-year period, and the Council's view is that increases in assistance would have been more generous and there would also have been an overall improvement in training allowances if there had been no credit squeeze. I have no time to go into more detail here about the League's recent activities, but my friend, Tom Smith, its General Secretary, has given me some copies of the triennial report to which I have referred, and these will now be placed on file in your national office.

Blind men and women themselves brought the League into being, and have made of it, over the years, the principal instrument of their own emancipation. The League, for its part, has helped to keep its members in the forefront of the social struggle and has given them the deep satisfaction that comes only from personal achievement. But this historical development, which carries with it a strong and permanent link with the labor union movement and close associations with the British Labour Party, has prevented many of the blind from joining forces in a single federation -- such as you have been able to form here in the United States. At present I cannot foresee any possibility of such a fusion. In these circumstances, some of us, for whom a labour union would not be an appropriate organization for the furtherance of our aspirations, have founded a parallel group, the National

Federation of the Blind of the United Kingdom. It is free from all political attachments, but no less dedicated to the improvement of the status of the blind in every respect. With a view to maintaining and increasing our usefulness to society, thereby widening our field of activities and improving our prospects, we seek to demonstrate our normality and our individual capacities in every possible way. With the assistance of all other organizations which are willing to cooperate with us, we endeavor to provide such help as we think necessary to enable our members to overcome the handicap of blindness as far as is practicable and, wherever possible, to achieve a state of parity with their seeing friends. As a completely non-political and an entirely independent organization, we feel that we are in the most advantageous position to negotiate with all other organizations, both governmental and private agencies, on behalf of our members. We always try to be most careful not to serve the interests of one category to the detriment of others.

The reason why we welcome so warmly the recent revival of interest in the National Committee in France, and the creation of a similar group in Holland not long ago, is that we are firmly convinced that the interests of the blind can best be served, not alone by the central government, nor by local or state governments, not alone by private, national, regional or local agencies, however effective any or all of these may be in their particular spheres, but by a close and confident partnership among all of them, including, of course, the organizations of the blind themselves. Happily we in Britain have now reached the stage at which all the partners, with the exception of a few local agencies, share this view and, of course, this means that we blind people are able to play a useful, and indeed an influential part in the development of work among the blind in our country. In fact, our influence is still somewhat out of proportion to our comparatively small membership. Hardly were we formally constituted, however, when the Royal National Institute for the Blind -- whose philosophy in this matter of partnership accords completely with our own, (that is, to work with the blind and with everyone else in what it believes to be the best interests of the blind) -- offered us two seats on its Executive Council, the same number as the National League already occupied. These seats automatically carry with them election to at least one of the Council's main committees, and this, in turn, leads to representation on one or two of the more specialized sub-committees of that main committee. The British Wireless for the Blind Fund, too, which regulates the supply of free radios to those blind people who cannot afford to buy them, reserves on its main committee one seat each for the League and for the Federation. These members are always consulted on such matters as the design of the receivers. Government departments are equally ready at all times to avail themselves of the advice and experience of our members, and in our short life of a dozen years or so, we have been represented at

most of the national conferences and study groups which those departments have convened, on such topics as the special welfare needs of the deaf-blind, the formulation of a national program of industrial homework, publicity for the extension of the employment of the blind into new professions, and for the enlistment of support from employers who have hitherto not hired any blind labor, and so on. We have also organized our own study groups to deal with matters which no other organization was likely to undertake for some time, but which we felt needed immediate investigation. For example, these study groups have concerned themselves with the problems of the partially sighted. Several of our members serve on the boards of local private agencies and we have representatives on the boards of most of the regional associations for the blind. Their presence enables us to be of direct assistance in the framing of policy and in making our needs better understood by our seeing partners. It will not surprise you to learn that we allow seeing people to become associate members of the Federation; but, of course, the direction of its affairs rests entirely in the hands of its full members, all of whom are themselves without sight. We hold an annual convention for two days, but in view of our much smaller membership, it is nothing like such an imposing gathering as yours, to which I have had the honor of reading this paper. Our delegates, however, also come from a wide range of professions. We have music teachers, switchboard operators and stenographers, physiotherapists, a Braille editor, a medical doctor, a journalist, a teacher of English to foreign students, a Braille proofreader, and so on. Our president is Mr. John Wilson, Director of the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind. Perhaps the two roles which he is called upon to play provide a better illustration than any other of the feeling of partnership which I have attempted to convey to you. It is as if your president, instead of occupying the distinguished position which he does in university life, were to earn his daily bread as Executive Director of the American Foundation for Overseas Blind! As you all know, John Wilson's agency is making remarkable progress in putting work among the blind on the map in British dominions and in other territories throughout the worldwide British Commonwealth of Nations. His objective is to assure to the blind themselves, whatever their economic and social condition, the status and dignity of self-respecting citizens, and a future life of ever-expanding freedom and opportunity.

I am happy to be able to report that in June of this year John Wilson's work received the recognition it so richly deserves, when he became one of the six British representative members of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind. This means that the president of the Federation and the general secretary of the League now both serve as members of the British delegation to the World Council. For the sake of the record, and to correct a slight error in a recent issue of the Monitor, I should add that Mr. T. H. Smith, General Secretary of the League, has been a

member of our delegation ever since the World Council was established, and it was only his other commitments which prevented him from taking his rightful place in the Council's last General Assembly in Paris four years ago. Conscious of the fact that this left our delegation without a blind member at the Paris meetings, the Royal Institute for the Blind, which meets the travel and maintenance costs of all six delegates to these assemblies, sent me along as assistant to the delegation. I shall always be grateful that they did so. If I had remained in London during that week my first meeting with George and Darlene Card, who immediately became dear friends of mine, would have been postponed for a whole year. In my view life is too short to allow such friendships to be delayed for a day longer than necessary.

Your wonderful generosity in inviting me to Boston for your convention has surely sown the seeds of many more friendships, and I should like to conclude by placing on record my warmest thanks to you for providing me with one of the most interesting experiences of my life. I only hope this paper has repaid you in some small measure for all the kindness and hospitality you have showered on me, both individually and collectively, during convention week. May we look forward to many years of fruitful cooperation and pleasant association in the work which is closest to the hearts and minds of us all!

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#### BRITISH N. F. B. CONFERENCE

The yearly Conference of the British N. F. B., (corresponding roughly to our own national convention), was held in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1958. The progress and achievement report was given this time by Mr. P.S. Armitage, the Senior Vice President. Some of the items in this report seem, at first glance, almost too trivial and too local to occupy the time and thought of a meeting at the national level, but it must be kept in mind that the area served by this organization is relatively small in comparison with American NFB territory. This annual Conference of our sister organization, therefore, bears more resemblance, in some ways, to one of our larger state conventions than to our national convention.

Among the more significant matters discussed by Mr. Armitage were the following:

(1.) Some progress was reported in gaining greater representation on statutory and voluntary committees concerned with blind welfare.

(2.) Negotiations with convalescent homes and retirement homes in an attempt to end discrimination against blind applicants for admission.

(3.) To meet the problem faced by the considerable number of blind persons who have jobs away from home and who have difficulty in finding accommodations, it was proposed that a register of all rooming houses and rental dwellings whose landlords are willing to accept blind tenants be maintained and kept current.

(4.) Mr. Armitage referred to a survey report prepared by the British N.F.B. President, John Wilson, listing the items of special expense to the blind. This survey shows that, in order to achieve parity of living standards with sighted workers having the same earning capacity, an annual handicap allowance of 150 pounds, (\$420), would be required. (Such handicap allowance, free of the means test, was advocated by the Oxford Conference in 1949, and this was re-affirmed by the General Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind at its Paris meeting in 1954. It will be remembered, however, that this re-affirmation came only after a bitter floor fight, during the course of which Mr. Barnett and the late Alfred Allen made a strenuous effort, with the half-hearted support of other agency champions of the means test, to reverse the position taken by the Oxford Conference. In this battle the American delegation was split down the middle and the chief allies on our side were our colleagues from Canada, Germany and the Scandinavian organizations of the blind. It is to be hoped that there will not be a repetition of the struggle next year at Rome but we feel confident that our forces are even stronger and more united than in 1954.)

(5.) Recognizing the threat which automation in factory and office holds for some blind workers, the report states that it is also likely that the installation of automatic equipment may bring about conditions favorable for specially trained blind technicians. A continuing study will be carried on so that these new possibilities will be recognized and full advantage taken of them promptly.

(6.) The Federation is striving to secure augmentation for blind persons engaged in home industries -- at least equal to that given workers in sheltered workshops for the blind.

(7.) A Braille directory has been prepared for users of the complicated London bus services.

(8.) A Braille duplicating machine has been purchased and put into service.

(9.) Successful protest to the B.B.C. against the broadcast of a play which misrepresented blindness and blind people.

(10.) Successful negotiations in behalf of two elderly blind men

who had been wrongfully detained in mental institutions.

(Editor's Note: We have only just begun to receive regularly the publications of the British National League of the Blind and the Braille Monitor will be reporting interesting developments in this other sister organization from now on.)

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#### NEW BRAILLE SYSTEM

(From The Columbian and Sun, via the Washington White Cane):

"After eight years of study, an American version of English Braille will be used in this country, said Byron Berhow recently in reporting on his trip to Louisville, Kentucky, where he attended the annual meeting of the trustees of the American Printing House for the Blind. The Superintendent of the State School for the Blind, Berhow, said the adoption of the American Braille would go into effect about January first. He listed several other results of the convention. Berhow said actually there is very little difference between American and English Braille, but after long, careful consideration it was decided to adopt an American version of the British Braille.

"The committee approved the use of the Lavender Writer, Berhow stated. He explained that it is an inexpensive Braille writing machine which is expected to cost about thirty-five dollars, considerably less than the presently used Braille writer that costs about one hundred dollars. Production of the new machine is expected in about a year."

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#### GOOD NEWS FROM GEORGIA

(From the Georgia Federation Newsletter): "...We are very happy to report to you that as a result of our lengthy and genuinely searching discussion [with state agency officials] we came to an understanding that renders the passage of our proposed stand operators bill entirely unnecessary. As you know, our bill proposed to limit the withholding administrative fee to three percent instead of the heretofore employed, sliding-scale figure, which ran up to two or more times that amount. Just prior to the first of the year, the Agency met our demands in this respect by fixing a flat withholding fee of four percent but exempting the first \$1,300. In our conference yesterday, Dr. Jarrell and his Department met our other demand, as set forth in the proposed legislation and agreed to adopt the Massachusetts administrative plan of allowing stand operators, who are competent and financially able, to

purchase and operate their stands independently.... This is truly a great step forward in the furtherance of our program and our philosophy. We wish to acknowledge and express appreciation to Dr. A. P. Jarrell, Director of Vocational Rehabilitation, for his sympathetic understanding and cooperative approach to this problem....

"While Dr. Jarrell still expresses opposition to our Advisory Committee bill, we have strong hopes that we may come to terms with his Department on the two other items of our current legislative program-- The Minimum Assistance Amendment and the Fair Working Conditions bill. The active support of the Welfare Department would be of very great help in persuading our Legislature to adopt these measures...."

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#### TABOOS FOR GLAUCOMA

(From the Washington State White Cane): "Uncontrolled glaucoma leads to blindness, a needless tragedy, since many new and potent remedies are available. The problem is to get the victim to recognize the disorder early and seek treatment.

"There is a continuous flow of fluid (aqueous humor) through the chambers of the eye, which is under sufficient pressure to keep the eyeball from collapsing. Glaucoma occurs when the outflow is blocked and excess fluid overdistends the visual compartment.

"Increased pressure damages the delicate nerve cells of the retina unless the fluid is allowed to escape through drainage holes near the base of the iris. These outlets may become obstructed due to infection, injury, or the aging process.

"Glaucoma is suspected wherever vision becomes foggy or discomfort is noted in and about the eyes. This includes colored halos around artificial lights, difficulty in focusing on objects, especially in dim light. Excessive activity of the tear glands, headaches, swollen lids and dissatisfaction with glasses, are other clues. These may appear rapidly or so gradually they escape detection for some time.

"Help is obtained through any means which reduces the amount of fluid in the eyeball and keeps the pupils as small as possible. Remedies for the former include Diamox, Carodrase and Neptezene. The size of the pupil is diminished by myoptic drops like Eserine, Pilocarpine, Prestigamin.

"Phospheline Iodide, an effective and long acting new myoptic,

is used once a day, preferably at bedtime. Surgery is recommended in the type of glaucoma that does not respond to medication.

"Pressure on the eyeball is increased by physical strain, over-indulgence in coffee or tea or by tight collars. The pupils enlarge in the dark, hence watching the movies or television is taboo. The same applies to eyedrops that dilate the pupils. Worry, quarreling or anything inducing undue emotional strain is also highly unadvisable in glaucoma cases."

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#### CALIFORNIA ITEMS

The December California Bulletin, (official organ of the California Council of the Blind), announced that that publication, hitherto issued on a paid subscription basis, would be sent out free from now on -- ink-print or Braille. Other items: -- At the Fall Convention of the Council, Bob Campbell was re-elected President....Russell Kletzing, of Sacramento, and Yvonne Eich, of San Diego, became First and Second Vice Presidents, respectively....Mrs. Juliet Bindt, of Berkeley, co-founder and past president of the Western Teachers of the Adult Blind, was honored by that organization at a testimonial breakfast during the annual meeting held at Cheyenne, Wyoming. Mrs. Bindt is a delegate-at-large to the California Council....In Chico, California, a reading service to the blind is paid for by the Community Chest. Such an arrangement is far more satisfactory from the standpoint of the blind. ... The East Bay Club of Blind Women, in addition to being one of the most active of all the Council's affiliates, is the only organization of blind women to hold a membership in the General Federation of Women's Clubs....A brand new Council affiliate has just come into existence -- the West Sacramento Club of the Blind -- largely through the hard work of Charles Knowles and Peter Riordan....Mrs. Bessie Leonard has been elected President of the Fresno affiliate, which was formed in January, 1958....Mrs. Anne Maxwell, blind stand operator at the Redlands Post Office, was elected unanimously by the Redlands Business and Professional Women's Club as "Woman of the Year"....Stanhope Pier, member of the Oregon Commission for the Blind, (and active member of the Oregon Council of the Blind), and Mrs. Clarice Woodward, of McMinnville, Oregon, were married recently. It was while the two were organizing a new Oregon Council chapter together that they decided to organize their lives together. Stanhope is a former Californian.

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## CHILD VICTIMS OF IGNORANCE

(From the Nebraska Observer): "Harry L. Hines, Director of the Nebraska Services for the Blind, states that one of his most baffling and frustrating problems is locating blind children who need help. 'It is difficult', he said, 'for such reasons as these: (1) Reticence by parents who feel there is a stigma attached to having a blind child. Many have an unwarranted fear that state aid will be forced on them, or their child will be taken away and summarily sent to an institution. (2) Teachers who, because of misdirected sympathy or just plain laziness, pass a child with a sight handicap on to the next grade, although the child has not mastered the subjects. (3) Lack of knowledge by some doctors of the peculiar needs of a blind child. A child may be perfectly normal mentally but is believed abnormal because he does not act like a child with sight. (4) Unfamiliarity with the problems of the blind on the part of county board'.

"'I would guess that there must be around 150 visually handicapped children that we do not know about and are therefore unable to help', Mr. Hines said. 'There are only five pre-school blind children in Omaha's Beth El nursery and only seven at the nursery at Lincoln. There must be more who need that training in those two areas. We feel that if doctors and teachers were required by law to report cases involving sight handicaps, many tragedies could be prevented.' Mr. Hines cited the following case records as typical:

"(1) A visually handicapped girl in the seventh grade, who could not read on a first grade level.

"(2) A Sand Hills community teacher refusing to seek aid for a normal but sight-handicapped girl in her class because her husband, a mechanic, worked for the child's father. She was afraid the father would be angered and take his business away. The child, found to be fourteen and still in the second grade, was aided by the Services for the Blind. She finished school, married and is now leading a normal life.

"(3) A visually handicapped ten-year-old boy, found to have a high mentality, became involved in more and more trouble because of an inability to cope with the misunderstanding of other youngsters and adults. He is now an excellent student at the Nebraska School for the Blind.

"(4) Three children, ages seven, nine and ten, needlessly spent a total of 17 years at the Beatrice State Home, an institution for the mentally retarded. The ten-year-old girl was committed at nine months. Among reasons given then was that she did not reach out for things like

a normal baby. She could not. The child, like the other two, was blind. The three were released within the last year and a half, after tests by the institution's new administration and the state's Services for the Blind showed them to have normal intelligence. All three are now progressing rapidly in normal development at the Nebraska School for the Blind. Could such tragic commitments be made again? 'It is possible a blind child of normal intelligence could be committed through misunderstanding by the parents and county board', Mr. Hines said. 'But the new testing programs at Beatrice could prevent a normal child from remaining there long.'

"(5) Mrs. Rose McDonald shuddered in thinking of the near tragedy involving her daughter, Susie, three. She said that 18 months ago, while visiting in an out-of-state city, she had Susie, totally blind since birth, examined by three doctors. 'They told me she was not normal mentally', Mrs. McDonald said. 'They told me I should commit her to a state institution for retarded children.' On her return to Omaha, Mrs. McDonald prepared commitment papers to send Susie to Beatrice. Meanwhile, the little girl became ill. She was taken to Children's Memorial Hospital. Hospital officials said Susie showed 'remarkable brightness'. An Omaha pediatrician refused to sign the commitment papers which would have sent Susie to Beatrice. Instead the doctor and hospital officials arranged for psychiatric tests. The psychiatrist, beaming affectionately at the mention of Susie, said after the three-month tests: 'From our observations we found she is certainly above average in intelligence.' The Services for the Blind then stepped in with its aid. Susie is now one of the brightest pupils at the Beth El nursery for blind children "

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#### ANACHRONISM

A recent issue of the New Outlook for the Blind contains an article subtitled "How Far Have We Progressed". It reproduces an English newspaper account of the opening of a new building in a "School for the Indigent Blind" -- a century and a quarter ago. Says the New Outlook writer: "Remembering that it reflects the views and attitudes of people so long ago, one reads this account today with some serious concern about the modest degree of adjustment in theory and resources that so many intervening generations have brought to bear on dealing with blindness".

I certainly share the concern of this modern commentator. One sentence in particular in the old English newspaper account suggests a striking parallel with a situation which -- while it is not as serious as it used to be -- still persists in some sheltered workshops in the U.S.A.

After describing how the inmates were trained in certain skills and then discharged, the account went on: "A few...however, are kept upon a permanent establishment, on a supposition that their...skill is necessary to enable the institute to keep up the credit of its manufacture."

Not so long ago I engaged in a somewhat heated discussion with the head of the sheltered workshop in Wichita, Kansas, who defended his policy of putting every possible obstacle in the path of his best workers to prevent them from getting jobs in competitive industry because, as he claimed, their abilities and skills made it possible for him to continue to employ a number of inferior blind workers. It has been reported that even the modern, much praised subcontract workshop in Seattle has barred employment counselors from its premises. At the National Workshop Conference held last year at Bedford Springs, Pennsylvania, which Paul Kirton and I attended, it was evident that there were more than a few workshop managers present who retained this thoroughly discredited point of view.

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#### HERE AND THERE

From the Promoter (North Dakota): "A minister was very fond of cherry brandy and one of his congregation offered to give him a bottle if he would acknowledge the gift in the church magazine. The minister agreed and in due course a paragraph appeared thanking the donor for his gift of fruit and the spirit in which it was given."

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From Horizon (United Kingdom): "Mr. Eric Gillette, the well known broadcaster and literary critic, has been appointed General Editor to the Royal National Institute for the Blind and will guide the future destiny of The New Beacon. Mr. Gillette has made Talking Book recordings of more than 100 books."

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"Arnold Graber, of South Dakota, joined the staff of the Division of Deaf and Blind, State Department of Education, as Home Teacher for the adult blind in Wyoming, and began work on November 17, 1958. Mr. Graber is especially well suited for this position and comes to Wyoming with a background of a college degree, with considerable graduate work. He also has had much work experience which will greatly assist him. We are happy to have him with us." H. Smith Shumway, Director.

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Growth of the Alabama stand program: "In 1952, the earliest year for which there is a record in the Federal office, the Alabama program operated 46 vending stands; in 1953, 64; in 1954, 75; in 1955, 85; in 1956, 89; in 1957, 103 and in 1958, 109."

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Excerpt from a letter written by T. F. Moody, Houston, Texas, to Dr. tenBroek: "...Mrs. Jeri Rougagnac, Executive Director of the Houston Lighthouse for the Blind, is interested in placing two blind women who have the required one year of experience on the telephone switchboard employing the Braille attachment....Mrs. Rougagnac has called upon the Houston Council of the Blind to seek your aid in prodding the United States Civil Service Commission into distributing to the regional offices the amendment to announcement 55 local....Mrs. Rougagnac requested copies of 'The Cross of Blindness' for each member of the board of the board of the Harris County Association for the Blind....Mrs. Rougagnac, by the way, is an associate member of the Houston Council of the Blind. She is admired by the blind of this locality for her sincerity, her proven ability and her fairness of mind. We are proud to have her name on our rolls."

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From "Editor's Chatter", Nebraska Observer: "...I hung on without batting an eye. Sure enough, we skidded safely to a stop before my apartment. But I was really jolted when I leaned forward to pay the fare and saw the cab driver take out a magnifying glass and peer through it to read the price shown by the meter."

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Otis L. Booth, President of the Atlanta Chapter of the Georgia Federation of the Blind, writes: "Since our state convention in August, our chapter has grown in membership from thirty-six to seventy-two. We are holding a raffle on December 20 and giving away a new television set. It appears that we will net about three hundred dollars on this venture for our local treasury."

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John Nagle, of the NFB Washington staff, has secured an apartment within three blocks of the office, which will be a great deal more convenient than the residence in Arlington, Virginia. His correct address is now 1722 19th Street, N.W., Apartment 602, Washington, D.C.

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Clyde Ross, President of the Ohio Council of the Blind, writes: "On December 7, 1958, Roger Williams, the popular American pianist, made a personal appearance in Akron, under the sponsorship of the Summit County Society of the Blind [Akron chapter of the OCB]. The hall was filled -- approximately 2,400 people. The event was a great success, artistically and financially. The Summit County Society of the Blind is independent of the United Fund program and for some time has been desirous of establishing an income without resorting to a public solicitation. From now on we plan to sponsor an annual concert on or near Pearl Harbor Day."

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Monitor readers will remember an item describing the placement of many automatic, coin-operated vending machines in the New York City Post Office -- involving a very serious loss of income to the blind stand operators in that building. The metropolitan chapters of our New York affiliate organized a joint committee to wait on the Postmaster and to call to his attention the implications of this vending machine competition. The members of this committee are Ray Dinsmore, Brooklyn; Tony Parise, Staten Island and Norman Decker, Manhattan. Several interviews were obtained by this committee and the Postmaster treated them with the utmost courtesy and consideration. More important, several definite concessions were granted. The Postmaster promised that no more vending machines would be installed and that a substantial portion of the revenue from those already in the building would go to the blind stand operators. He indicated that he might approve a plan whereby the operators could own, operate and service the machines themselves. He agreed to future meetings with the committee at regular intervals. The efforts of the committee are being coordinated with those of the New York Commission for the Blind, represented by Miss Ann McGuire.

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The December issue of the Nevada Newsletter reports the recruitment of 34 new active members and three new associate members in a two week period. In a state with a population as sparse as Nevada, this is a truly astonishing achievement.

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On Monday, December 8, two hardy New Hampshire Federationists, Franklin Van Vliet and Eddie Vachon, ignoring polar temperatures, began a whirlwind invasion of Maine. Their purpose, a 46th NFB affiliate. On three previous trips, the Monitor Editor has attempted to form an organization in that state and Charles Little, of Boston, has done some

spade work there also. Maine has proved a tough nut to crack but the New Hampshire boys report definite progress and plan to return in a few weeks for another go at it.

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The Lone Star State Federation of the Blind will hold its next annual convention at the Hotel Texas at Fort Worth on March 21 and 22. Our Texas affiliate is hoping to welcome out-of-state Federation guests from near and far. I have been invited to be the banquet speaker.

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Since the list of state publications appeared in the November Monitor, the Virginia Federation has begun issuing a regular newsletter.

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The Virginia Federation of the Blind will hold its 1959 state convention on April 18 and 19 at the George Mason Hotel, Alexandria, Virginia. As many out-of-state visitors as possible should attend and will receive a hearty welcome. Applications for hotel reservations should state the applicant is attending the VFB meeting. Highlight of the Saturday night banquet will be an address by Dr. Jacobus tenBroek.

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The current issue of the International Journal for the Education of the Blind contains an eleven-page article, entitled "Teaching Reading by Use of Word Games", by Miss Edna H. Schmidt, of Milwaukee. Miss Schmidt was the Federation's principal fund-raiser during the first decade of its existence and has numerous personal friends throughout Federationland.

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From Arkansas comes word that the dates for the 1959 convention, at the Lafayette Hotel in Little Rock, are to be October 23, 24 and 25. Dr. Frank Palmer, President of the Morrilton Chapter, has been named 1959 Membership Chairman and is making plans to carry on an all-out chapter building membership campaign throughout the state. Dr. Palmer is also the President of the Federation Credit Union, which is building its membership and is already making loans.

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From the Missouri Monthly Report: "During 1958, thanks to our united efforts, four new chapters joined our Federation; our credit union was founded and has already begun to play a helpful role in our lives; we went to the aid of our fellow blind in the Kansas City Post Office; we enjoyed much more cordial relationships with the Bureau for the Blind; there were numerous instances of real cooperation between local chapters, and we worked hard and effectively on behalf of national legislation for the blind. That's a good record -- one to be proud of -- but we must not rest on our laurels. Our organization is larger, stronger and more united than ever before, and we must use these assets whenever and wherever possible to render enlightened and unselfish service to the blind of our state and nation.... In the near future there is to be a meeting, on an informal basis, between representatives of the Bureau and the Federation. This is a definite step in the right direction.... The United Workers for the Blind held their annual election of officers at their December business meeting. The newly elected President is Mr. Fred Keller...."

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On December 27 William Lyons resigned as President of the Rhode Island Federation of the Blind and was succeeded by the First Vice President, Mr. Carl S. King, Jr., 28 1/2 Warren Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

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The Buffalo, New York Chapter is planning to order our little "Misconceptions" reprints in quantity lots and place them in the waiting rooms of doctors, dentists, etc.

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The Washington State White Cane reports that, on November 15, the Columbia Association of the Blind was presented with an official charter by the Washington State Association of the Blind President, Arnold Sadler. Vancouver is directly across the Columbia River from Portland, Oregon, and is the site of the State School for the Blind. The Reverend William W. Smith is the first President of this newest Washington affiliate.

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As of January 16, here are the 1959 White Cane Week mailing quantities which various states plan to send out next May: California, 62,000 units; Colorado, 25,000; Illinois, 50,000; Kansas, 25,000;

Kentucky, 25,000; Massachusetts, 10,000; Missouri, 60,000; Nevada, 10,000; New York, 35,000; Oregon, 5,000; South Carolina, 10,000; Tennessee, 30,000; Texas, 10,000; Vermont, 4,000; Washington State, 55,000, and Wisconsin, 70,000. We have not yet heard from Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Louisiana, Michigan, or West Virginia -- all of which usually conduct a mail campaign. There will undoubtedly be additional last minute orders from a few other states.

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Henry Kruse, of Chatham, New Jersey, sends me a description of the annual party which the North Jersey Association of the Blind, (a chapter of our New Jersey affiliate), puts on for the blind children of the Patterson area. "In selecting gifts," Mr. Kruse writes, "the chapter members endeavor to choose toys which will help to give these blind children an accurate picture of the world around them." He adds, "This project appears to me to be an interesting type of long-range membership drive." His letter also states that the New Jersey Council is sponsoring a Blind Advisory Committee bill in the present legislature.

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From Family Circle via the Montana Observer: "Elena Zelayeta is known not only for her superb Mexican cookery but for her gaiety, warmth, and boundless energy. Yet Elena lost her sight many years ago, before the birth of her second son. She determined to learn to cook for her family 'in the dark'. She had to conquer fear of fire, hot fat, sharp knives. She learned to separate eggs by breaking them into her hand and letting the whites slip through her fingers; to time cooking by radio breaks. After she was widowed with two boys to support, she gave cooking lessons and published three books, two cook books and a little volume, 'Lessons in Living', that embodies her philosophy of life....Her newest book is entitled 'Elena's Secrets of Mexican Cooking'." (Elena Zelayeta served as cooking instructor at the Summer School for the Adult Blind held in Helena in 1947.)

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The same issue of The Observer chronicles the first meetings of the new chapters in Great Falls and Livingston. Mike Maloney became the first president of the former.

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The 13th annual convention of the Blinded Veteran's Association was held in Seattle, Washington, July 16-19. Dr. Robert A. Bottenberg, of San Antonio, Texas, was elected President. He is a research psychologist in the Human Resources Center at the United States Air Force Lackland Field. The Reverend Thomas J. Carroll, BVA's National Chaplain, addressed the convention via an amplified telephone hook-up from New York City. This is the first BVA national convention he has missed. He is still confined by a knee injury to a wheel chair at the Institute for Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation of the Bellevue Medical Center.

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From the December New Outlook for the Blind: "Milton A. Jahoda has become Executive Director of the Cincinnati Association for the Blind, succeeding Calvin S. Glover, who has retired after 40 years of service. Mr. Jahoda, who has been legally blind since childhood, became the first Director of the Allen County League for the Blind, in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1951, when that agency was established."

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And from the same issue: "At its annual meeting in October, the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind elected the following officers: Paul G. Conlan, of Michigan, President; Harry L. Hines, of Nebraska, President-elect; W. B. Gaines, of Georgia, Secretary; Herbert R. Brown, of New York, Treasurer and Carl Camp, of New Hampshire, and Merle Kidder, of North Dakota, Directors."

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And again: "Stanley and Wallene Mendenhall, both of the staff of the Albuquerque Training Center of the New Mexico School for the Visually Handicapped, died in an automobile accident on September 10. A jet plane, attempting a landing in a heavy rainstorm at the nearby airport, went out of control, hurtled across the street and demolished the Mendenhall car, killing both occupants instantly.

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It was officially confirmed a few days ago that Earl Scharry resigned from the NFB staff in December.

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From The Ziegler (January): "A Braille magazine is being contemplated directed toward users and potential users of guide dogs.

Anyone wishing to receive this magazine free of charge, please write:  
"Guide Dog Review", 143 East Alvarado Street, Pomona, California, or  
The Braille Institute of America, 741 North Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles  
29, California.

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From a letter written by Walter McDonald (Georgia) to Kenneth Jernigan (Iowa): "Even though I can't read Braille like you can, I would not give up my Braille edition of the Monitor for any or all of your electronic reproductions...."





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